

For All to Hear by Madame_Ashley

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Summary:

A Jopper one-off requested by ObeyDontStray from the "I Love You" prompts (trash-by-vogue) on tumblr.

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Author's Note:

- For [ObeyDontStray](#).

When the Chief strolled into Hawkins General Store for the third time in a week, customers and staff alike exchanged knowing glances. By this point, everyone in town had reached one of two conclusions: either the General Store had a very serious, ongoing shoplifting problem or Jim Hopper had – for the moment, at least – stopped bedding every woman in the county in order to focus his attentions on Lonnie Byers' eccentric ex-wife.

Joyce was in the process of helping an elderly patron decide on a tablecloth pattern, when she overheard Jim making small talk with Donald at the front of the store. Her pulse quickened at the sound of his voice, but she kept her attention on work. "I'm afraid it really comes down to polka dots or flowers...unless you like the grey one better...yes, it would probably show all the grease stains..." While not actively watching him, her mind's eye remained alert to his every move as Hopper pretended to peruse the shelves ever closer to where she stood.

Predictably, the indecisive customer chose the first tablecloth she had been shown, and Joyce resisted the urge to roll her eyes as the woman wandered off to make her purchase. Sidling up to Hopper while he feigned interest in a package of dishcloths, Joyce whispered, "Hop, you can't just keep showing up here. You know how people are. I don't want anyone to get the wrong idea."

Jim moved into Joyce's personal space, the heat of his closeness making her dizzy, giving him what she hoped was a hard glare. Hopper - taking any opportunity to touch her - brushed an imaginary bit of lint from her shoulder. "What wrong idea? I think spending time with you and your boys is the most right thing I've done in a long time." He chuckles a bit as he says this, but the guarded look in Jim's eyes betrays this attempt at levity; he is more hurt than amused.

"It's best not to talk out here," Joyce mutters, heading for the breakroom and gesturing for Hopper to follow her.

Relieved to find the small room empty, Joyce sits down at the only table and lights a smoke to calm her nerves. Hopper opts to perch on the edge of the table, looking down on her, interrogation-room style. He's such a cop, Joyce thinks, taking a long drag, and shaking her head with a little smile. "Hop, don't you think that our reputations are shitty enough on their own without publicly joining forces?"

"Now you see, that's where we differ. I think that our shared notoriety lends itself well to collectively telling Hawkins to fuck off," he murmured, his index finger tracing a path from her temple down the line of her jaw. By reflex, Joyce settles her cheek against his hand, resting there and quietly smoking for a minute before replying.

"Most of the town is convinced that I'm just your most recent distraction," she says softly, refusing to meet Jim's eyes as she stubs her cigarette out in the ashtray.

"You know that's not true, don't you?" Hopper takes her hand and pulls her to standing. The room is so tiny that Joyce's back is touching the wall as he tilts her face up to his. "I'm just so tired of sneaking around. I'm not ashamed, and you shouldn't be either." Jim takes a step forward, pushing her hair out of her face. His hands are on her shoulders now, pressing her against the wall, and bending to kiss her.

"Joyce, I'm in love with you. I love Will and Jonathan, and all of you matter more to me than what anyone else thinks of us."

Through the open doorway Hopper and Joyce can hear nervous laughter, and soon Donald pokes his head in, a big smile on his typically solemn face. "Thanks for the public announcement, Chief, but why don't you tell us something we don't already know?"

At first, Joyce and Hopper are too embarrassed by their compromising position to fully understand Donald's meaning. Only when her boss starts motioning towards the wall at Joyce's back does she grasp what he's getting at. Jim's kiss had proven so engrossing that she failed to notice her elbow activating the store intercom on

the wall behind her.

“Well, Hop, it looks like you got your wish. Way to make a broadcast out of it.” Her tone is admonishing, but when Hopper’s gaze meets hers, her body flushes with pleasure and relief in equal measure.

Author’s Note:

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